

CLAIMS

1. A method of estimating the severity of a picture artefact arising from block based processing, comprising the steps of deriving a pixel difference signal and filtering the signal horizontally and vertically to derive a local measure of artefact severity.
2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein said measure is employed to control the operation of a filter adapted to conceal the visibility of said artefact.
3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein said filter is adapted to remove horizontal and vertical frequencies at the block repetition rates
4. A method according to Claim 2, wherein said measure is employed to control a fade between the picture signal and the output of said filter.
5. A method for estimating the signal to noise ratio of a picture signal decoded from a compressed bit-stream, comprising the steps of determining the quantization values employed in said compression and deriving said estimate by processing said values.
6. A method according to Claim 5, wherein a base ratio is taken as an experimental value of signal to noise ratio employing the finest allowable quantization and a pre-determined quantization weighting matrix.
7. A method according to Claim 5, wherein said processing comprises the steps of forming a function of quantization scale code and modifying said function by a measure of picture activity.

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8. A method according to Claim 5, wherein said function of quantization scale code is a quadratic function.
9. A method according to Claim 5, wherein said function of quantization scale code is modified to take into account deviations from said pre-defined quantisation weighting matrix.
10. A method according to Claim 7, wherein said measure of picture activity utilises the bit rate of the compressed bit-stream.
11. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein a measure taken at an upstream location is passed forward for comparison with a measure taken at the device under test.

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